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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

25

7 May 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL GROUP
(AUGMENTED)

From: Brig. Gen. Lansdale *SL*

Subject: Role of the Chief of Operations, Operation Mongoose

I am concerned that we are losing sight of our sound original concept, in Operation Mongoose, of careful integration of the independent elements of government in planning and operations, to assure optimum use of capabilities with timing and control. The interest and responsibility of the Special Group (Augmented) has underlined the need for such continuing and close coordination in all phases of plans and operations.

The Chief of Operations was to have functioned for this purpose as a single point above the independent governmental elements. He was to assure that all aspects were considered in relationship to direction from the Special Group (Augmented) and to implementing activities planned or in action.

As we have progressed into initial operations, while still necessarily placing emphasis upon collecting intelligence and shaping policy interpretations to reflect the facts we face, there has been a lesser-priority contact with the Chief of Operations which is defeating his role.

In order to assure that the Chief of Operations can perform the ~~assignment of best~~ serving the Special Group (Augmented), as coordinator ~~and monitor~~ before plans and operations are firm, and to make ~~possible effective~~ reporting of problems and progress to the Special Group (Augmented), it is requested that all plans and actions with operational aspects hereafter be made known to the Chief of Operations at the very earliest time feasible. Certainly it must be before the fact, and not during or after the fact of actions. (This also will facilitate the Chief of Operation in supporting team members of Operation Mongoose

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as they have interdepartmental and policy problems).

The necessary reporting need not involve undue time by the busy operational representatives of Operation Mongoose in Departments and Agencies. A few lines by special courier can bring a matter to my attention or, upon request, I will drop my chores for the Secretary of Defense and come personally for a few minutes, any time.

It is clear that each operational representative must keep his own top boss informed. However, we must be agreed that the Chief of Operations is the officer who works with the several governmental elements on behalf of the Special Group (Augmented) and that the Chief of Operations is the link to Operation Mongoose as a united, interdepartmental project. If this is not clear, then we invite the danger of matters falling between the chairs and a most undesirable lack of responsible coordination.

Sometime, during the first three days of this week, I would like to meet with the Special Group member and his operational representative to discuss the above briefly, in State, in Defense, and in CIA.

cc Eyes Only to

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|-------------------|------------------------|
| 1. General Taylor | 5. Mr. Kennedy |
| 2. Mr. Johnson | 6. General Lemnitzer |
| 3. Mr. Gilpatric | 7. Chief of Operations |
| 4. Mr. Malone | |